

# Pilot Mountain State Park



## PARK INFORMATION



**Pilot Mountain State Park**  
1792 Pilot Knob Park Road  
Pinnacle, NC 27043

**Office:** 336-444-5100  
pilot.mountain@ncparks.gov

GPS: 36.341276, -80.462930



Please visit the North Carolina State Parks website or contact the park office for **the most current information** about seasonal hours, activities, alerts, camping fees, programs, rules and weather.

## AT A GLANCE



**Established:** 1968

**Landmark:** Pilot Knob, which has served as a navigational landmark for centuries, dating back to the native Saura Indians.

**You can find...** ravens, which can be spotted soaring above Big Pinnacle.

**Trails:** 14 trails

- › 1 Kids TRACK trail
- › 28 miles of hiking
- › 9 miles of horseback riding

**Accesses:** Mountain Section, Pilot Creek, Bean Shoals, Ivy Bluff.



## ACTIVITIES

### ON THE WATER



**Paddling:** A 2-mile portion of the Yadkin River flows through the park offering scenic views. The river flows past the Bean Shoals Canal Wall, part of an ambitious project undertaken between 1820 and 1825. View these historic walls along Bean Shoals Canal Trail. There is one canoe access located on Shoals Road.

**Fishing:** Cast your line to catch smallmouth and spotted bass and catfish. A state fishing license is required and the regulations of the N.C. Wildlife Resources Commission are enforced.

### ROCK CLIMBING

Rocky cliffs offer a challenge to experienced climbers. Climbing is permitted only in designated areas. All climbers must register before beginning a climb. Contact the park office for further information.

### CAMPING



#### 42 family campsites

- › Each site has a tent pad, table and grill
- › Two washhouses with hot showers located nearby
- › Sites open: March 15 – November 30

#### 2 paddle-in campsites

- › 0.75 mile downstream from paddle launch on Shoals Road
- › Pit toilet available
- › Reservation required

### PICNICKING



The picnic areas at Pilot Mountain offer a choice of shady dining spots. The picnic area in the mountain section of the park is located near the summit parking lot. Drinking water and restrooms are located nearby.

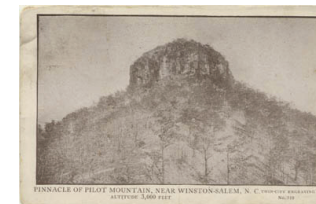
The covered picnic shelter will accommodate up to 35 people. Use of the picnic shelter is free of charge.

## HISTORY HIGHLIGHTS

Pilot Mountain is a remnant of the ancient Sauratown Mountains. A quartzite monadnock, this rugged mountain rock has survived for millions of years while the elements have eroded surrounding peaks to a rolling plain.

Pilot Mountain is capped by two prominent pinnacles. Big Pinnacle, with walls of bare rock and a rounded top covered by vegetation, rises 1,400 feet above the valley floor, the knob jutting skyward more than 200 feet from its base. Big Pinnacle is connected to Little Pinnacle by a narrow saddle.

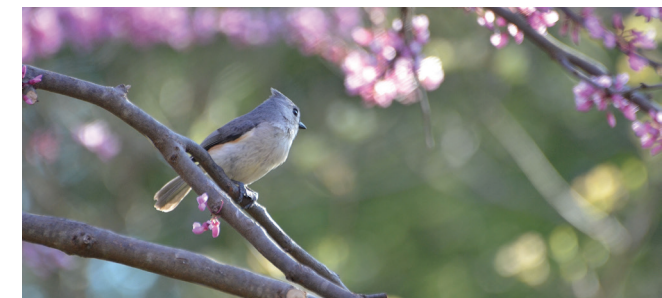
The mountain was mapped in 1751 by Joshua Fry and Peter Jefferson, father of President Thomas Jefferson. Pilot Mountain became North Carolina's 14th state park in 1968. The Pilot Mountain Preservation and Park Committee proposed the establishment of Pilot Mountain as a state park in order to protect it and the surrounding area from commercial development. The group secured options on the land and raised matching funds that made it possible to purchase with federal grants.



## FLORA AND FAUNA







- Rhododendron
- Mountain Laurel
- Wild blueberry
- Huckleberry
- American toad
- Chorus frog
- Spring peeper
- Eastern bluebird
- Carolina wren
- Brown thrasher
- Raven
- Red fox
- White-tailed deer
- Opossum
- Raccoon






# TRAILS


## Mountain Section – 1792 Pilot Knob Park Rd., Pinnacle NC



**Grassy Ridge Trail**   moderate 1.5 miles  
This trail begins at the Visitor Center and can also be accessed from Pinnacle Hotel Road/Culler Road. It wanders through lowland pine and hardwood forests crossing meandering streams with ample seasonal wildflower displays. This trail can be used to connect to the Corridor Trail or Mountain Trail


**Grindstone Trail**   strenuous 3.5 miles  
This trail leads one-way to (and from) the Visitor Center. The trail starts across the road from the Visitor Center, continues past the old Park Office, the campground, and climbs the mountain through the woods to the summit. The trail ends at the summit picnic area. Vegetation on this trail changes with elevation.

**Jomeokee Trail**  moderate 0.8 mile  
This trail travels around the base of the Big Pinnacle. It starts at the upper side of the summit parking area. The trail crosses the gap to the Big Pinnacle, then makes a loop around the base and merges into the same trail to return across the gap. There are rare and interesting plants along this trail, as well as the tall, impressive cliff. Climbing on the Big Pinnacle is prohibited. Please stay on the trail.



**Ledge Spring Trail**   advanced 1.0 mile  
This very challenging trail with rock steps begins on the Grindstone and ends on the Jomeokee Trail. Hiking round trip to the Summit Parking Lot is approximately a 2.0 mile extremely strenuous loop. The trail travels along the foot of the cliffs and ledges to the west of the Little Pinnacle.


**Little Pinnacle Overlook**  easy 0.1 mile  
This short trail leads to the Little Pinnacle Overlook, one of the best views in the park. Follow the path located south of the Jomeokee Trail up a moderate grade to the Little Pinnacle bluff for a beautiful view of the Big Pinnacle, Sauratown Mountains and Hanging Rock State Park to the east. On a clear day, one can view 3,000 square miles from this point. A great place to take pictures. Located above a stone wall on the upper side of the summit parking area.

**Mountain Trail**   strenuous 4.3 miles  
This trail skirts the bottom of the mountain and connects to the Grindstone to complete a 6-mile loop. The Mountain Trail can be accessed from the Pinnacle Hotel Road parking lot, found 0.25 miles uphill of the Visitor Center, or above the campground off the Grindstone Trail.



**TRACK Trail**  moderate 0.3 mile  
This trail offers scenic views of Pilot Mountain's Big Pinnacle and vistas of the surrounding mountains, leading hikers through a unique fire-adapted forest ecosystem. Located to the left of the summit restroom. This trail offers activities for children.




## Pilot Creek Access – 382 Boyd Nelson Rd., Pinnacle NC



**Pilot Creek Trail**   moderate 3.3 miles  
This trail starts at Boyd Nelson Road and ends at the family campground. You can connect to the Grindstone and Mountain Trail to make a long loop around the mountain or take the Grindstone to the summit. The trail crosses tributaries of Pilot Creek and ascends through pine oak/heath forest to the campground. This trail was built by the Friends of Sauratown Mountains, at no cost to the park.

**Pilot Creek Meadow Walk**   
Explore and observe birds, butterflies, dragonflies and more as you walk through the meadows above Pilot Creek. This mown path leads through restored warm season grass meadows to a small farm pond where you can try your luck to catch catfish, bass, sunfish, and more (Valid NC Fishing License required). This path is a registered part of the Rosalynn Carter Butterfly Trail and has been established to benefit native pollinators and grassland birds.

## Bean Shoals Access – 103 Yadkin River Park Trail 622 Hauser Rd. Pinnacle NC



**Bean Shoals Canal Trail**   easy 0.5 miles  
A 0.5 mile one-way trail that travels alongside the Yadkin River and passes the remnants of the Bean Shoals Canal. As you walk along this trail you will see what remains of an attempt in the 1820s to build a canal around the shallow and rocky Bean Shoals. To reach the start of this trail by vehicle you will have to drive through Horne Creek three times, vehicles with high clearance are recommended. At the end of the park road the trail starts next to the kiosk, crosses the railroad tracks and turns right at the river. Use caution crossing the railroad tracks, they are active

**Corridor Trail**    strenuous 6.6 miles  
This sloped hiking and bridle trail meanders through pine and hardwood forests connecting the Mountain Section and River Section of Pilot Mountain State Park. Parking lots for this trail are located at Hauser Road and Pinnacle Hotel Road/Culler Road. **Note:** Horse and rider must remain on marked bridle trail. No horses may cross the Yadkin Valley Railroad. Horses may only be unloaded and trailers parked in the lots located at each end of the Corridor Trail (Hauser Road and Pinnacle Hotel Road/Culler Road parking lots).

**Horne Creek Trail**   moderate 2.5 miles  
This hiking trail begins at the picnic area and meanders along Horne Creek with many varieties of spring wildflower. The trail then closely follows the Yadkin River until it meets up with the Bean Shoals Canal Trail. You can make a 3.5-mile loop by returning to the picnic area on the park road.



## Mountains-to-Sea State Trail

The MST passes through the park on the Corridor, Mountain and Grindstone Trails. The trail enters the park on the southern end of the Corridor Trail from the west and exits the park to the east. For more information please visit: [trails.nc.gov](http://trails.nc.gov).

**Yadkin Islands Trail**   moderate 1.5 miles  
This hiking and bridle trail begins at the Hauser Road Parking Lot. Bridle trail ends at Yadkin River Park trail where you can make a 2 mile loop. Hiking trail is 1.5 miles one-way ending at Bean Shoals Canal Trail. Hikers may cross the river at your own risk to explore the Islands in the river, which are unmarked/unblazed. Do not attempt to the cross river if you cannot see the bottom.

**Yadkin River Park Trail**  moderate 1.3 miles  
This multi-use road begins at Hauser Road and ends at the turn around parking area. High clearance vehicle is recommended.

## Ivy Bluff Access – 4240 Shoals Rd., East Bend NC

**Ivy Bluff Trail**   moderate 1.3 miles  
his trail has moderate to steep slopes covered with mountain laurel and rhododendron along the south edge of the Yadkin River. Trail begins at the Ivy Bluff Parking Lot.